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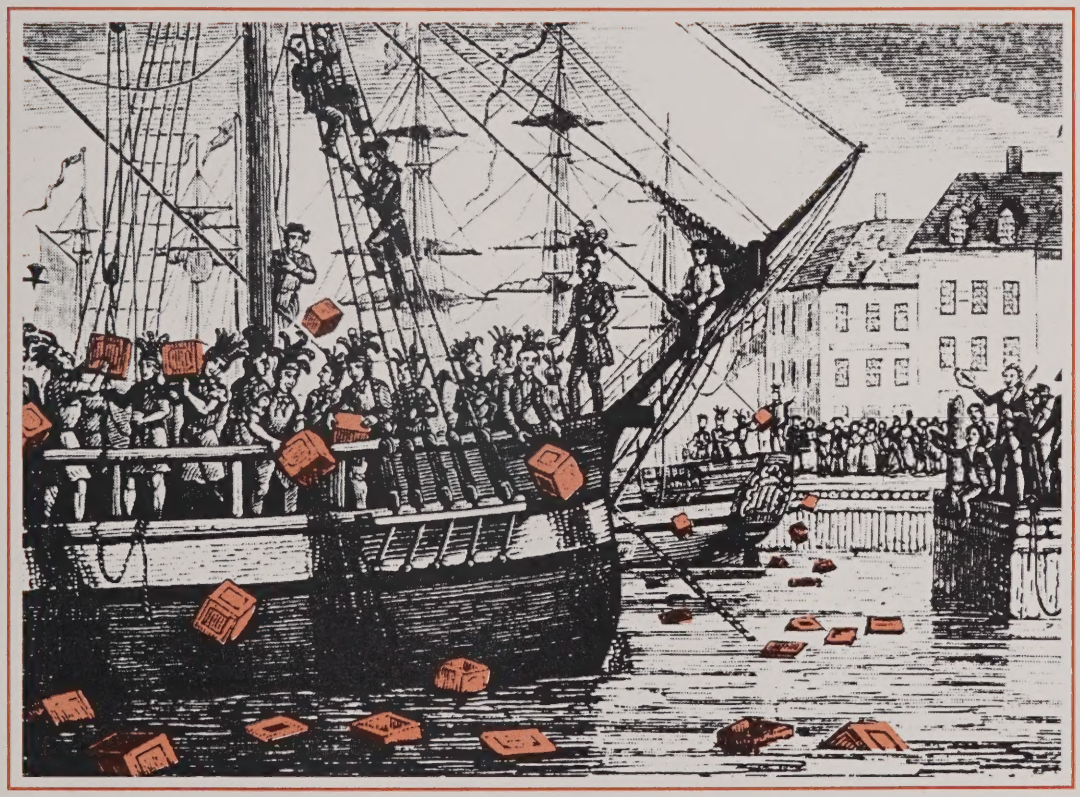
THE Hampden Hippocrat

FALL 1997

A Call To Arms!



The Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Medicine

The Hampden Hippocrat
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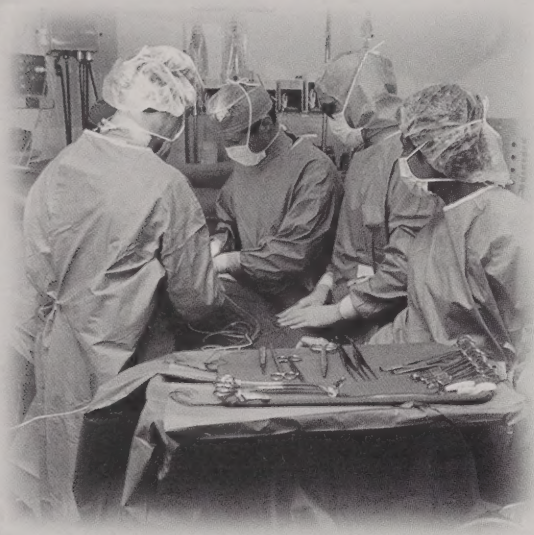
Noble Health Systems

Quality Care Close to Home



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THE
Hampden Hippocrat
FALL 1997

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The official bulletin for The Hampden District of the Massachusetts Medical Society. Founded in 1942 by Edward P. Bagg, Jr., M.D. and William A. R. Chapin, M.D.

PAST EDITORS: Max Millman, M.D., John C. Ayres, M.D., Walton E. Stevens, M.D., Vivian M. Purdy, Walter J. Pacosa, M.D., William J. Baker, M.D., Terry D. Ryan, M.D., Nicholas P. W. Coe, M.D., Donald J. Higby, M.D.

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HAMPDEN DISTRICT MEDICAL SOCIETY
1997-1998 SEASON

A CALL TO ARMS!
FALL DISTRICT MEETING

PLACE: The Log Cabin Banquet and Meeting House
500 Easthampton Road · Holyoke, MA 01040
DATE: Tuesday, September 23, 1997
BUSINESS MEETING: 6:00 p.m.
SOCIAL HOUR: 6:30 p.m.
DINNER: 7:00 p.m., Spouses are welcome!

A Presentation by The Newly Formed Grass-Roots Activist Organization

"THE AD-HOC COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF MEDICINE"

Dr. Susan Bennett of Boston, with the assistance of some chosen colleagues, will represent the committee and review the fight to stop the corporate take-over of medical care. Dr. Bennett is a general internist who practices at the Lown Cardiovascular Center in Brookline and has been practicing in Massachusetts since 1976. She is also an Instructor in Medicine at Harvard Medical School, an Assistant Physician at Massachusetts General Hospital and an Associate in Medicine at Brigham and Women's Hospital.

INTRODUCTION OF SPEAKER:
Leslie G. Selbovitz, M.D.
Clinical Risk Administrator
Baystate Medical Center

SPECIAL APPEARANCES BY:
Senator Brian P. Lees
Representative Paul E. Caron

DOCTORS, AWAKE FROM YOUR SLUMBER!

Note: If you must cancel your dinner reservation, please call the HDMS office before noon on Sept. 23rd. If the cancellation is not made, you will be billed for your dinner.

Please Clip and Return

Hampden District Medical Society
Suite 22
1111 Elm Street
West Springfield, MA 01089

I shall attend the meeting at The Log Cabin

Please print name: _____

I shall bring my spouse: _____

I shall bring a guest (name): _____

CHOICE OF MEAL: (please check one)
❑ Baked Scrod ❑ Chicken Cordon Bleu
❑ Yankee Pot Roast Jardiniere

❑ Enclosed is my check for $20.00 per guest or spouse. The Society is asking our members for voluntary payment of $20.00 for their own dinner to help defray costs.

Women Doctors Dinner

The next Women Doctors Dinner will be held on Thursday, October 16, 1997 at The Delaney House in Holyoke, MA. Cocktails will be served at 6:30 p.m. with dinner beginning at 7:00p.m. If interested in attending, or for further details, please contact Doctor Alice Angelo at 413/784-3220.

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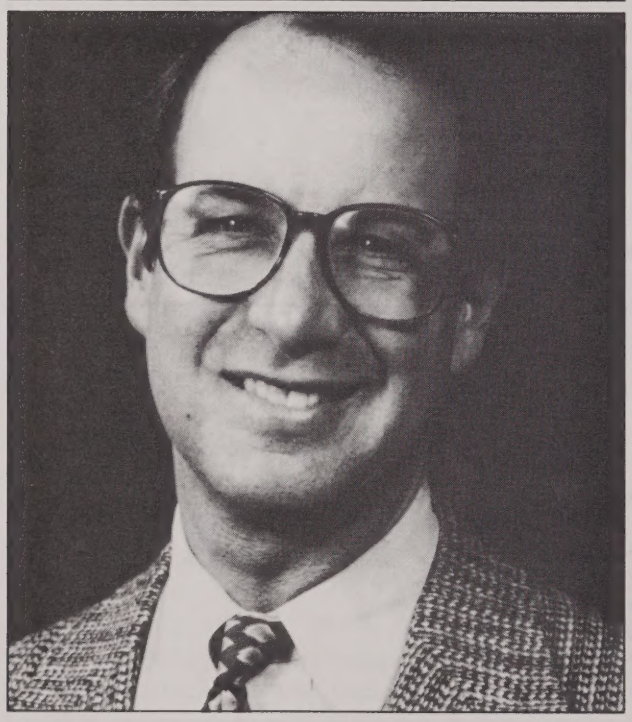
"It Has Been The Greatest Adventure of All"

I met a ghost from my past, unexpectedly, last summer. It was in Hartford, the town I grew up in, where I had gone for the day and encountered a surgeon, now retired, now quite old, who over



Marc A. Linson, M.D., President

thirty years ago had sent me on my way into medicine. He barely recognized me nor recalled our last meeting, but as he picked at the buttons on his sweater with ancient fingers asked, "so how was your journey?"

Our first meeting was a staged interview when I was 16 years old, a high school junior, enthused and challenged by reading The Citadel and Arrowsmith, wondering where my interest in biology could lead. I knew no doctors, had no physicians in the family, so I called the office of the chief of surgery at our city's hospital and made an appointment to talk. I sat in his office four weeks later, each in a padded arm chair across a small coffee table. He was vigorous then, taller, with what was called distinguished gray at the temples. My question was simple; "Why be a doctor?"

He began talking about the usual reasons, the application of science to immediate human needs, the practicality, the respect people would have for you.

Then, realizing that these were missing the soul of the question his deepest reverence came out. The surgeon told me it was and had to be a sacred trust between a doctor and patient, something so unique, so important, that only a few could be given the responsibility, that this field of discipline was, truly, a special calling. His eyes misted over.

I remember being convinced by him then and for some time to come, that he was right; like clergy, future doctors responded to that message sent out to only some of us, a special calling, to enter the ranks of scientists who tended the ill. Later for me came college, medical school, residency, practice and the enlightenment not expressible in that late fall New England meeting thirty years before: That medicine had another side and would change so that the call many would hear,

only, was for employment alone. That the doctor would become one of many attendants, a provider, and at that, not so special at all to many.

So, there I was, standing in front of the man who largely had sent me out on that journey, trying to decide how to sort-out the confused feelings of three decades of trying to answer the call and buried now with the tons of doubts and despair all of us have for our profession. And then, out came my answer to his question, not from the head, but from the heart, the truth of it all: "It has been the greatest adventure of all, thank you!" ■

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Doctors, Wake From Your Slumber!

by Marc A. Linson, M.D.
President H.D.M.S.

The fall meeting of The Hampden District Medical Society is proud to host a presentation by the "Ad Hoc Committee for The Defense of Health Care" headed by Dr. Bernard Lown, a Noble Laureate, of Brigham & Women's Hospital, Boston. Dr. Lown's organization will discuss with us their efforts to raise a professional outcry concerning the crisis for-profit medicine has had on all of us.

We print their treatise entitled "A Call to Action" and encourage all physicians to attend this meeting. ■

A Call To Action

The following individuals participated in drafting this call: Joan Agretelis, R.N., Jerry Avorn, M.D., Charles M. Blatt, M.D., Susanna E. Bedell, M.D., Susan E. Bennett, M.D., David H. Bor, M.D., Emile Frei III, M.D., Ernesto Gonzalez, M.D., Suzanne Gordon, Thomas Graboys, M.D., Charles Hatem, M.D., David U. Himmelstein, M.D., Timothy H. Holtz, M.D., Bernard Lown, M.D., Robert J. Master, M.D., Dorothy McCabe, R.N., C.N.A., Timothy B. McCall, M.D., Mitchell T. Rabkin, M.D., Jeffrey Scavron, M.D., John D. Stoeckle, M.D., Lee Swislow, R.N., John Walsh, M.D., Steffie Woolhandler, M.D.

We are physicians and nurses from across the spectrum of our professions, serving patients rich and poor, in hospitals and clinics, private offices and HMOs, public agencies and academia. Mounting shadows darken our calling and threaten to transform healing from a covenant into a business contract. Canons of commerce are displacing dictates of healing, trampling our professions' most sacred values. Market medicine treats patients as profit centers. The time we are allowed to spend with the sick shrinks under the pressure to increase throughput, as though we were dealing with an industrial commodity rather than an afflicted human being in need of compassion and caring. The right to choose and change one's physician, the foundation of patient autonomy and a central tenet of American medicine, is rapidly eroding.

Doctors and nurses are being prodded by threats and bribes to abdicate allegiance to patients, and to shun the sickest, who may be unprofitable. Some of us risk being fired or "delisted" for giving, or even discussing expensive services, and many are offered bonuses for minimizing care. Listening, learning, and caring give way to deal-making, managing, and marketing. The primacy of the patient yields to a perverse accountability - to investors, to bureaucrats, to insurers and to employers. And patients worry that their doctor's judgement and advice is guided by the corporate bottom line.

Public resources of enormous worth - non-profit hospitals, visiting nurse agencies, even hospices - built over decades by taxes, charity and devoted volunteers, are being taken over by companies responsive to Wall Street and indifferent to Main Street. Communities find vital services closed by remote executives; savings are committed not to more pressing health needs, but to shareholders' profits. Not-for-profit institutions,

forced to compete, must also curtail unprofitable activities like research, teaching and charity, or face bankruptcy. Hospital chains' profits reach $100 per patient per day[1]; a single HMO president nets $990 million in a take-over deal[2]; and insurers' overhead consumes $46 billion annually[3].

At the same time, the ranks of uninsured continue to grow, while safety-net public hospitals and clinics shrink. Even many with insurance find coverage deficient when they need it most; care or payment are too often denied for emergencies or expensive illnesses. The sick are rushed out of hospital beds or hurried through office visits. Increasingly, patient comfort, the special needs of the elderly, infirm, or disabled are ignored if they conflict with the calculus of profit.

"The primacy of the patient yields to a perverse accountability."

The shift to profit-driven care is at a gallop. For doctors and nurses, the space for good work in a bad system rapidly narrows. For the public, who are mostly healthy and use little care, awareness of the degradation of medicine builds slowly; it is mainly those who are expensively ill who encounter the dark side of market-driven health care.

We criticize market medicine not to obscure or excuse the failings of the past, but to warn that the changes afoot push medicine further from caring, fairness and efficiency. We differ on many aspects of reform, but on the following we find common ground:

1. Medicine and nursing must not be diverted from the primary tasks; the relief of suffering, the prevention and treatment of illness, and the promotion of health. The efficient deployment of resources is a critical, but secondary objective.

2. Pursuit of corporate profit and personal fortune have no place in caregiving.

3. Potent financial incentives that reward overcare or undercare weaken doctor-patient and nurse-patient bonds, and should be prohibited. Similarly, business arrangements that allow corporations and employers to control the care of patients should be proscribed.

4. Patients' right to a physician of choice must not be curtailed.

5. Health care must be the right of all.

Before the values we cherish are irretrievably lost, we invite all to join in a dialogue on medicine's future. The following urgent measures are needed:

1. An immediate state-wide moratorium on for-profit takeovers of hospitals, insurance plans, HMOs, physicians' practices and other health care institutions - pending the development of comprehensive state and national policies addressing these issues.

2. Meetings in hospitals, clinics, HMOs, offices, medical and nursing schools to discuss the health care crisis. We must educate ourselves, and the public, on the values that are at risk; establish coalitions to resist the onrush of for-profit systems; and discuss the elements of reform necessary to meet the needs of patients and communities. Such discussions must acknowledge the realities of funding as well as caring.

3. A widely representative national convocation to formulate a caring vision true to the community roots and samaritan traditions of American medicine and nursing.

References

1. Columbia HCA Healthcare Corporation. 10Q Report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission November 19, 1995.

2. Managed Healthcare Market Report. June 30, 1996; 4(12):1.

3. Levit KR, Lazenby HC, Sivarajan L. Health care spending in 1994: slowest in decades. Health Affairs 1996; 15(2):130-44. ■

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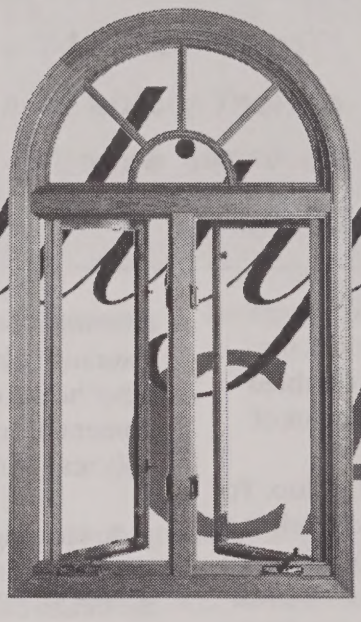

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MMS House of Delegates Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Medical Society House of Delegates was held May 15-17, 1997. The following officers were elected: Allan H. Goroll, M.D., President; Marylou Buyse, M.D., President-Elect; Jack Evjy, M.D., Vice-President; George P. Santos, M.D., Secretary-Treasurer; and Myer S. Bornstein, M.D., Assistant Secretary-Treasurer.

Congratulations to Alan M. Harvey, M.D., a member of Hampden district, who was elected Speaker of the MMS. The House of Delegates voted to allow the MMS President to continue in the quest for a new location for the MMS corporate headquarters. The process is underway for the state society to acquire a portion of property currently owned by Polaroid Corporation. The property is located on Winter Street in Waltham. Following are a few of the resolutions approved by the House of Delegates as they appeared in the June 1997 issue of "Vital Signs":

Congratulations to Alan M. Harvey, M.D., a member of Hampden district, who was elected Speaker of the MMS.

- Support a ban on the sale of handguns known as "Saturday Night Specials", support a tax on the sale of both new and used guns, and support the banning of gun sales to convicted spouse and child abusers.
- Ask the federal Health Care Financing Administration to establish a single fee schedule area for Massachusetts, instead of the two fee districts now in effect.
- File legislation that would force health plans to establish "clear and fair" selection and deselection criteria based on quality of care.
- Reaffirm MMS' support for the creation of an all-payer fund for medical education, in place of the Medicare-only funding system that now exists.

Several resolutions were sent to the MMS Board of Trustees for further study. The trustees will report their findings at the House of Delegates Interim Meeting in November of 1997. Those resolutions are as follows:

- Support a statewide moratorium on the takeover of hospitals, insurers, HMO's, physician practices, and other health care institutions by for-profit corporations.
- Support clinical trials on the medical use of marijuana.
- Oppose legislation which would legalize medicinal marijuana smoking unless the practice is approved by the Food and Drug Administration.
- Establish an MMS policy on residency training for international medical graduates. ■

TIPS: Western Mass. First Expands Treatment Options

TIPS(transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt) was successfully undertaken for the first time in Western Massachusetts, in May, at Mercy Hospital. Following is a brief explanation of this new procedure provided to us by Mercy Hospital.

Patients suffering from serious liver diseases run the risk of several complications, among them internal bleeding, or variceal hemorrhage. In the past, acute variceal hemorrhage meant surgical intervention, but a new procedure has changed the clinical approach to managing variceal bleeding. Called TIPS (transjugular intrahepatic portosystemic shunt), it was successfully undertaken for the first time in Western Massachusetts in May, at Mercy Hospital.

The nonsurgical procedure is designed to alleviate pressure of the portal and systemic venous system. Damage and scarring of liver cells causes pressure to rise in its main blood flow. The pressure creates backflow in accessory pathways that fail and cause massive gastrointestinal bleeding. TIPS reduces that pressure gradient and thus the risk of bleeding, while patients avoid major surgery.

"TIPS is a significant percutaneous, minimally invasive treatment approach which continues to prove its effectiveness," said Dennis deJesus, M.D., the interventional radiologist who led the Mercy team during the first TIPS. "The procedure opens up yet another option, especially for those patients who are at high surgical risk and may be awaiting a liver transplant. However, TIPS isn't a replacement for long term treatment in some patients, and other clinical studies bear that out."

"TIPS is a significant percutaneous, minimally invasive treatment approach which continues to prove its effectiveness"

"The classic indication for using this procedure is failed endoscopic sclerotherapy," said interventional radiologist, Ram Chaturvedi, M.D., "TIPS skirts some of the risks inherent with surgical intervention such as anesthesia, fluid management and additional stresses placed on an already diseased liver. Another important point is that a surgical shunt for decompression of the portal system precluded liver transplant. TIPS changes that, especially when patients with varices have no other options."

Guidance in radiology intervention is accomplished by noninvasive imaging with contrast and fluoroscopy; Mercy Hospital is equipped with the latest fluoroscopic imaging and ultrasound guidance technology. Analog signal processing is giving way to newer digital signal processing and management. Just as MRI and CAT scan technology have reshaped diagnostic imaging, so ultrasound and fluoroscopy have changed procedural intervention. "Also, the use of carbon dioxide for imaging makes us unique in

the Northeast and limits the potential risk of contrast," deJesus said. "This is especially useful in patients with underlying medical renal disease or a history of contrast allergy."

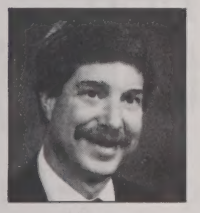
Mercy Hospital's TIPS team also included Yolanda St. Jean, R.T., C.V.; Doreen Dumaine, R.N.; Jill Moore, R.N.; Gerry Desjardins, R.T., C.V.; and Maureen Strycharz, R.T., C.V.

"After the TIPS, we routinely obtain three-month follow-up ultrasounds to assess patency of the shunt," deJesus said. "The ultrasound imaging can quickly and easily assess flow rates and predict stenosis or occlusion. Depending on the clinical scenario, we can do a revision, or if it clots, we can dissolve the clot."

Studies show that TIPS revisions can be performed readily and easily. In some cases, experts say the procedure can be accomplished on an outpatient basis. Similar clinical studies and follow-up have shown that revised shunts, whether occluded or stenotic, did not cause patients rebleeding during the next surveillance period. ■

ARE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT

- the impact of the medicare-medicaid anti-kickback regulations on your daily practice?
- issues relating to the sale of your practice
- structuring employment, partnership and shareholder agreements for group practices?
- malpractice claims due to inadequate informed consent?
- reducing estate taxes, and protecting assets from creditors' claims?
- providing for the orderly disposition of your practice in the event of death or disability?



Attorney
Arthur W. Price

Arthur W. Price and Michele J. Feinstein, partners in Cohen, Rosenthal have more than twenty-five years of combined experience in representing area physicians in their practices and individually. They counsel solo and group practices in their day to day business as well as in their planning for growth or extraordinary concerns. They also advise physicians on personal and family problems.

Call Arthur W. Price or Michele J. Feinstein to discuss your practice or personal concerns. We're here to help.

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Michele J. Feinstein

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As physicians, our hearts have always been with our patients. Our mission saving lives.

Once this was enough.

Today, however, we are called upon to save more than our patients' lives. We are called upon to save their rights as well.

That's why I'm asking you to support the American Medical Association (AMA) as well as your state and local medical associations.

Together, we can achieve real and lasting changes. Already we have made great strides on behalf of our patients. Working together, we are educating a nation about the dangers of "gag" clauses, developing patient protection measures, and launching a wide spectrum of public health initiatives.

During Women In Medicine Month, we gratefully acknowledge the participation and support of all our female members. The AMA now has more women physicians than any other medical association. We encourage all female physicians, residents, and medical students to become members. So please, join now. Your patients' future rights and your entire profession depend on your commitment today.

"Let's keep our commitment where our hearts are. Behind our patients."

Support your patients and your profession. Join the AMA, and your state and county medical associations.

Nancy Wilson Dickey, MD
President - Elect
American Medical Association

American Medical Association
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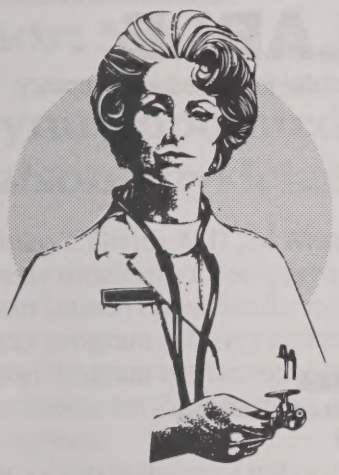

A Tribute To Our Women Physicians

With September being designated as "Women in Medicine" month, the Hampden District Medical Society would like to pay tribute to all the dedicated women physicians who are members of our organization.

Hampden District Medical Society

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Short Notes

Glynn Appointed Cancer Liaison Physician

Philip T. Glynn, M.D., of West Springfield, MA, recently received a three-year appointment as Cancer Liaison Physician for the Hospital Cancer program at Mercy Hospital. The Cancer Liaison Program is an integral part of the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons.

Dr. Glynn is among a national network of over 2,000 volunteer Cancer Liaison Physicians who provide leadership and support to the Approvals Program, and other Commission on Cancer activities.

Dr. Glynn provides leadership to the cancer committee at Mercy Hospital in order to maintain their Commission-approved cancer program, or assist them in seeking approval as a new program. Dr. Glynn also provides community leadership by volunteering at the unit level of the American Cancer Society.

For more information on the Cancer Liaison Program or the Approvals Program of the Commission on Cancer, please contact the Commission on Cancer at the American College of Surgeons, 55 East Erie Street, Chicago, IL 60611, (312) 664-4050. ■

Teres Co-Authors Book

Dr. Daniel Teres, Medical Director of Health Services Research at Baystate Medical Center and Professor of Medicine at Tufts University, has co-authored a book. The book entitled "Gatekeeping in the Intensive Care Unit", describes the key issues involved in managing patient care in a hospital ICU. Case studies, combined with extensive discussion, illustrate "real-world" examples of complex management issues and policy decisions associated with the gatekeeping process.

For more information on how to order a copy, please call the Foundation of the American College of Healthcare Executives, 1-708-450-9952. ■

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In Memoriam

John J. Alifano, M.D., Dr. John J. Alifano, 94, physician, author, poet and humanitarian, formerly of 270 Longhill St., Springfield, Mass., died April 9 in Avon.

A familiar figure in Springfield's South End, his office was at 924 Main St., where he treated area families for more than 60 years.

Born in Lioni, Province of Avellion, Italy, he came to this country in 1920. He was educated in the Scuola Communale and Ginnasio Prep. Minetta of Lioni, Italy.

After arriving in America, he attended Boro Hall Academy of Brooklyn, N.Y., and did his premedical studies at American International College in Springfield. He studied at Middlesex University (now Brandeis University), where he received his B.S. and M.D. degrees. He also attended Massachusetts University Extension Courses and studied philosophy.

He did his internship and residency at Holy Family Hospital in Brooklyn, N.Y., St. Vincent's Hospital Medical Center in New York and Buffalo Columbus Hospital in Buffalo, N.Y.

He wrote and published hundreds of essays, poems and other literary works, receiving numerous awards, honors, and citations. Some of his writings are "Lyric Sentiments," published in 1960, "The Atheist and the Believer" in 1964, "Fruits from Fertile Fields" in 1969, "My Pathways" in 1984, and "Reminiscences" in 1992.

He was a contributor to "Anthology of Contemporary Verse" in 1947, and "Anthology of Italian-American Poetry" in 1955. He also contributed articles to the Springfield Newspapers, the Hampden Hippocrat, and was on the editorial staff of Il Mondo Libero (The Free World) of Deerborn, Mich.

He was a member of the Western Massachusetts Writers Guild, the Dante Alighieri Society, the Springfield Italian Cultural Center, was made honorary Springfield Chief of Police, and was selected "Man of the Year" by the Unico National Springfield Chapter in 1988.

His wife Helen (Ferrace) Alifano died in 1994. He leaves two sons, Gerald A. of East Longmeadow, Mass., an attorney, and Dr. John J. Jr. of Longmeadow, Mass.; two daughters, Pamela M. Basile of Avon, and Maria L. Armitage of Wilbraham, Mass.; and two granddaughters. ■

A Look Back

Over the years, John J. Alifano, Sr., M.D., provided our readers with much enjoyment in the sharing of his poetry collection. With fond remembrance, following is a sample of his work.

OBSERVATIONS

We seek an honest man
In every field and camp;
We have this or that scan,
Diogenes had a lamp.

Some honest men elude
Our perspicacious looks,
But let's not be too rude
To those who are on hooks.

When we a finger point
And ready are to blame,
The other three in joint,
Against us do the same.

The Hippocratic creed
Can teach medicos much,
But when we deal with greed
The oath gets out of touch.

Yes, honest men are found
Where conscience rules with pride,
Where duty can be bound
To truth and justice wide.

REAL WORTH

It's grand for us to dream
About great love and wealth,
But to be on the beam
Is when we have good health.

Of course, to dream is fair
And to wake up is sound!
One keeps us in the air,
The other on the ground.

— Dr. John J. Alifano, Sr.

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In Memoriam

Edward T. Brewer, M.D., Dr. Edward T. Brewer, 78, of 711 Rogers Ave., died June 28, 1997 in Mercy Hospital, Springfield.

He was a longtime anesthesiologist at Mercy Hospital, Springfield, and retired in 1982.

Born in Bridgeport, Conn., he lived many years in this area. He was a graduate of the University of Notre Dame and Georgetown University Medical School.

He was also a Navy Veteran of World War II, and a member of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.

He leaves a friend, the Rev. Herbert C. Baloga of Chicopee, Mercy Hospital chaplain.

Memorial contributions may be made to any charity. ■

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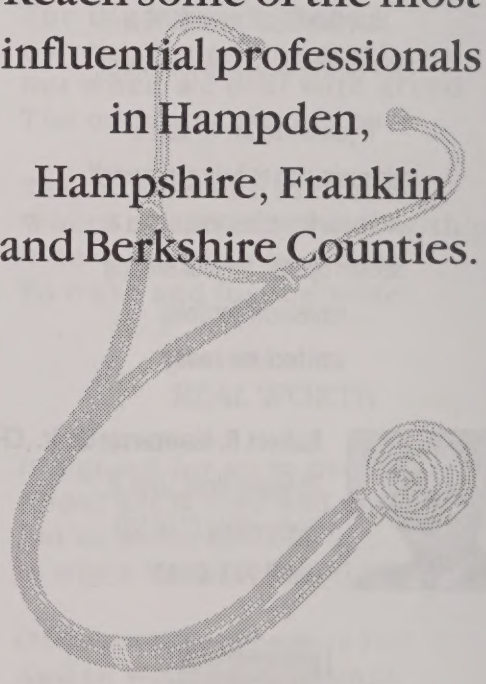

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